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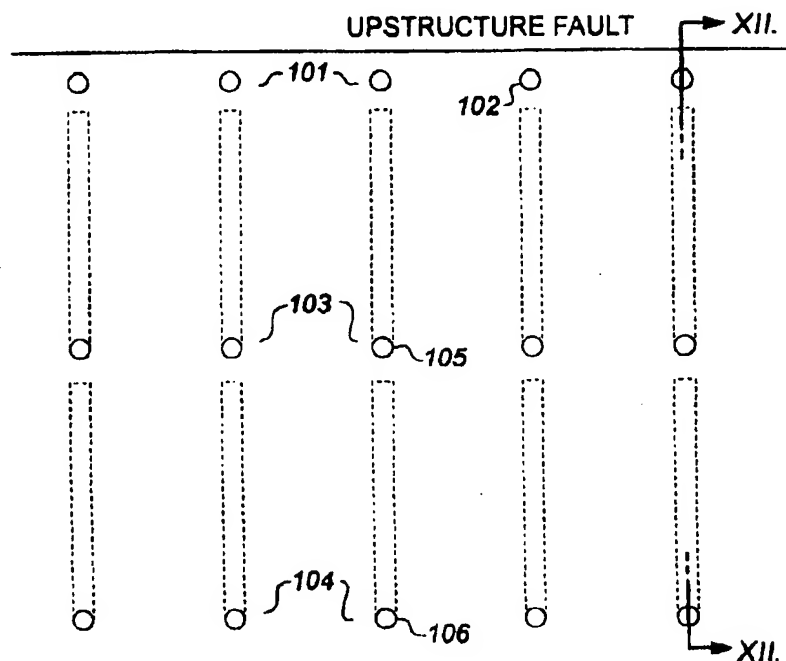
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(54) **PROCEDE DE COMBUSTION IN-SITU POUR CHAMP DE  
PETROLE**


(54) **OILFIELD IN-SITU COMBUSTION PROCESS**

DISCLAIMER - RENONCIATION



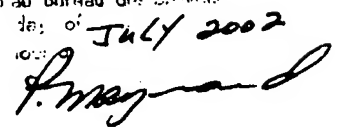
(57) A well arrangement is used wherein the production wells are generally horizontal, positioned low in the reservoir and arranged generally perpendicularly to a laterally extending combustion front. The combustion front is propagated by a row of vertical air injection wells completed high in the reservoir. The open production wells function to cause the combustion front to advance along their lengths. The process is characterized by a generally upright combustion front having good vertical and lateral sweep.



DISCLAIMER IN PATENT UNDER SECTION 48 OF THE PATENT ACT	
Name of patentee <b>Alberta Research Council Inc.</b>	Docket Number <b>ARC-017OP</b>
Patent Number <b>2,176,639</b>	Date Patent issued <b>August 8, 2000</b>
Title of Invention <b>OILFIELD IN-SITU COMBUSTION PROCESS</b>	
<p>1. The patentee of Patent No. 2,176,639, granted on August 8, 2000 for an invention entitled OILFIELD IN-SITU COMBUSTION PROCESS, has, by mistake, accident or inadvertence, and without any wilful intent to defraud or mislead the public,</p> <p>(a) made the specification too broad, claiming more than that of which the patentee or the person through whom the patentee claims was the inventor; or</p> <p>(b) in the specification, claimed that the patentee or the person through whom the patentee claims was the inventor of any material or substantial part of the invention patented of which the patentee was not the inventor, and to which the patentee had no lawful right.</p> <p>2. The name and complete address of the patentee is  <b>ALBERTA RESEARCH COUNCIL INC.</b>  <b>250 Karl Clark Road</b>  <b>Edmonton, Alberta</b>  <b>CANADA T6N 1E4</b></p> <p>3. (1) The patentee disclaims the entirety of claim 1 and the entirety of claim 10.</p> <p>Signed at Edmonton, Province of Alberta this <u>12<sup>th</sup></u> day of <u>December</u>, 20<u>01</u>.</p> <p>  Signature</p> <p><b>Keith Salmon, Chief Financial Officer</b>  Authorized Signatory for Assignee</p> <p>Please direct correspondence to:  Deborah G. VandenHoff  Van Tassel &amp; Associates  212 - 207 Bank Street  Ottawa, Ontario K2P 2N2</p>	

## DISCLAIMER -- RENONCIATION

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**"OILFIELD IN-SITU COMBUSTION PROCESS"**

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**ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE**

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A well arrangement is used wherein the production wells are generally horizontal, positioned low in the reservoir and arranged generally perpendicularly to a laterally extending combustion front. The combustion front is propagated by a row of vertical air injection wells completed high in the reservoir. The open production wells function to cause the combustion front to advance along their lengths. The process is characterized by a generally upright combustion front having good vertical and lateral sweep.

1                                    Technical Field

2                    This invention relates to an in-situ combustion process for  
3    recovering hydrocarbons from an underground reservoir.    More  
4    particularly, it relates to a process in which the production wells each  
5    have a horizontal leg and these legs are positioned perpendicularly to  
6    and in the path of a laterally extending and advancing combustion front.

7                                    Background Art

8                    In-situ combustion processes are applied for the purpose of  
9    heating heavy oil, to mobilize it and drive it to an open production well  
10   for recovery.

11                   In general, the usual technique used involves providing  
12   spaced apart vertical injection and production wells completed in a  
13   reservoir.    Typically, an injection well will be located within a pattern  
14   of surrounding production wells.    Air is injected into the formation, the  
15   mixture of air and hydrocarbons is ignited, a combustion front is  
16   generated in the formation and this resulting combustion front is  
17   advanced outwardly toward the production wells.    Or alternatively, a row  
18   of injection wells may feed air to a laterally extending combustion front  
19   which advances as a line drive toward a parallel row of production wells.

20                   In both cases, the operator seeks to establish an upright  
21   combustion front which provides good vertical sweep and advances  
22   generally horizontally through the reservoir with good lateral sweep.

23                   However, the processes are not easy to operate and are  
24   characterized by various difficulties.

1           One such difficulty arises from what is referred to as gravity segregation.

2       The hot combustion gases tend to rise into the upper reaches of the reservoir. Being  
3       highly mobile, they tend to penetrate permeable streaks and rapidly advance  
4       preferentially through them. As a result, they fail to uniformly carry out, over the cross-  
5       section of the reservoir, the functions of heating and driving oil toward the production  
6       wells. The resulting process volumetric sweep efficiency is therefore often undesirably  
7       low. Typically the efficiencies are less than 30%.

8           It would therefore be desirable to modify the in-situ combustion technique  
9       so as to better control the way in which the combustion gases flow and the front  
10       advances, so as to increase the volumetric sweep efficiency. The work underlying the  
11       present invention was undertaken to reach this objective.

12           The invention, in its preferred form, incorporates aspects of two  
13       processes which are known in the art.

14           Firstly, it is known to initiate the combustion drive at the high end of a  
15       reservoir having dip and propagate the combustion front downstructure, isobath-wise.  
16       This procedure to some extent reduces the problem of gravity segregation of the  
17       combustion gases, because the gases are forced to displace the oil downward, in a  
18       gravity influenced, stable manner.

19           Secondly, Ostapovich et al, in U.S. patent 5,211,230, disclose completing  
20       a vertical air injection well relatively high in the reservoir and a horizontal production  
21       well relatively low in the reservoir. The production well is positioned transversely  
22       relative to the combustion front emanating from the injection well. The production well  
23       is spaced from the injection well. By implementing this arrangement, the combustion  
24       front follows a downward path, toward the low pressure sink provided by the production  
25       well and the benefit of gravity drainage of heated oil is obtained. These effects

1 enhance the sweep efficiency of the process and facilitate the heated oil reaching the  
2 production well. However, the premature breakthrough of the combustion front at a  
3 locus along the length of the transverse, horizontal leg will result in leaving an unswept  
4 reservoir zone between the leg's toe and the breakthrough locus.

5 The present invention will now be described.

6 SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

7 In accordance with the preferred form of the invention, it has been  
8 determined that:

- 9 • If a generally linear and laterally extending, upright combustion  
10 front is established and propagated high in an oil-containing  
11 reservoir; and
- 12 • If an open production well is provided having a horizontal leg  
13 positioned low in the reservoir so that the well extends generally  
14 perpendicularly to and lies in the path of the front and has its  
15 furthest extremity ("toe") spaced from but adjacent to the injection  
16 source; then
- 17 • the production well provides a low pressure sink and outlet that  
18 functions to induce the front to advance in a guided and  
19 controlled fashion, first towards the toe and then along the length  
20 of the horizontal leg - under these circumstances, the front has  
21 been found to remain generally stable and upright and is  
22 characterized by a relatively high sweep efficiency;

- 1                   •     additionally, the air flows through the burnt out reservoir and  
2                             through the upright combustion front, forming combustion gases  
3                             (CO<sub>2</sub>, CO, H<sub>2</sub>O) whose streamlines bend towards the horizontal  
4                             leg, due to the downward flow gradient created by the action of  
5                             the production well as a sink. An oil upgrading zone is formed  
6                             immediately ahead of the front. The draining oil tends to keep  
7                             the bore of the horizontal leg full, so there is little opportunity for  
8                             unused oxygen to be produced through the production well until  
9                             the front has advanced the length of the leg; and  
10                  •     as just stated, the heated oil drains readily into the production  
11                             well for production therethrough.

12                   When compared in experimental runs with a conventional procedure  
13     wherein spaced apart, simulated vertical air injection and production wells were  
14     completed in the same horizontal plane of the reservoir and a combustion front was  
15     initiated and propagated, the present invention was found to be relatively characterized  
16     by:

- 17                   •     increased percentage of reservoir volume swept,  
18                   •     increased recovery percentage of the oil in place, and  
19                   •     increased average gravity of produced oil.

20                   Additionally, the present procedure involving a horizontal producer, is  
21     found to be characterized by the advantage that the combustion front always intercepts  
22     the horizontal leg of the horizontal well at the toe point, rather than at a location along  
23     the length of the leg.

1 Up to this point, the invention has been described with reference  
2 only to a combustion process. As previously stated, an important feature of the  
3 invention is that the properly oriented, open horizontal leg of the production well  
4 functions to directionally guide and stabilize the advancing displacement front.  
5 There is a likelihood that this feature could beneficially be used with steam, a  
6 partially miscible gas drive or miscible solvent gas drive to control and stabilize  
7 the advancing displacement front which is functioning to reduce the viscosity of  
8 the oil directly in front of it.

9 Therefore, in broad terms, the invention is a process for reducing  
10 the viscosity of oil in an underground reservoir and driving it to a production well  
11 for recovery, comprising: providing a well, completed relatively high in the  
12 reservoir, for injecting a gaseous fluid into the reservoir to form an advancing,  
13 laterally extending displacement front operative to reduce the viscosity of  
14 reservoir oil; providing at least one open production well having a generally  
15 horizontal leg completed relatively low in the reservoir, said leg having a toe  
16 spaced along the main plane of the reservoir relative to the injection well, said  
17 leg being positioned substantially perpendicular to and in the path of the  
18 advancing front; injecting the fluid through the well and advancing the  
19 displacement front along the leg; and producing the production well to recover  
20 oil from the reservoir.



1                    **DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS**

2                    Figures 1a and 1b are top plan and side views schematically  
3                    showing a sand pack with simulated injection and production wells completed in  
4                    a common horizontal plane, as was the case in experimental run 1-D reported  
5                    on below;

6                    Figures 2a and 2b are top plan and side views schematically  
7                    showing a sand pack with simulated vertical injection well and perpendicular,  
8                    horizontal production wells completed high and low in the pack, respectively, as  
9                    was the case in experimental run 2-D reported on below;

1           Figure 3 is a perspective view schematically showing a sand pack with  
2   a linear array of simulated Injection wells and a simulated perpendicular, horizontal  
3   well, completed high and low respectively in the pack, as was the case in experimental  
4   runs 3-D and 4-W reported on below;

5           Figures 4a and 4b are top plan and side views schematically showing a  
6   staggered arrangement of simulated wells completed in the sand pack with a vertical  
7   injection well and a pair of parallel, spaced apart, perpendicular, horizontal wells,  
8   completed high and low respectively in the pack, as was the case in experimental run  
9   5-D reported on below;

10          Figures 5a, 5b and 5c are top plan, side and end views of a test cell  
11   used in the experimental runs reported on below;

12          Figure 6 is a flow diagram showing the laboratory set-up, including the  
13   test cell of Figures 5a - 5C, used to conduct the experimental runs reported on below;

14          Figures 7a and 7b are isotherm maps developed in the sand pack during  
15   run 1-D (prior art configuration), taken along the horizontal and vertical mid-planes  
16   respectively;

17          Figures 8a and 8b are the isotherm maps developed in the sand pack  
18   during run 2-D, taken along the horizontal and vertical mid-planes respectively;

19          Figures 9a and 9b are the isotherm maps developed in the sand pack  
20   after 45 minutes of combustion during run 3-D, taken along horizontal planes close to  
21   the top and bottom of the pack, respectively;

22          Figures 9c, 9d, 9e and 9f are the isotherm maps developed in the sand  
23   pack along the vertical mid-plane after 45, 240, 360 and 460 minutes of combustion,  
24   respectively, during run 3-D;

1                   Figure 10 is a plot showing the cumulative production of the oil in place  
2                   (expressed in percent) for runs 1-D, 2-D and 5-D;

3                   Figure 11 is a plan view showing a preferred field embodiment of the well  
4                   layout; and

5                   Figure 12 is a side cross-section of the well arrangement of Figure 11.

6                   Best Mode of the Invention

7                   The invention was developed in the course of carrying out an  
8                   experimental investigation involving test runs carried out in a test cell or three  
9                   dimensional physical model.

10                  More particularly, a test cell 1, shown in Figures 5a, 5b, 5c and 6, was  
11                  provided. The cell comprised a rectangular, closed, thin-walled stainless steel box 2.  
12                  Dimension-wise, the box 2 formed a chamber 3 having an area of 40 square  
13                  centimetres and height of 10 centimetres. The thickness of each box wall was 4  
14                  millimetres. The chamber 3 was filled with a sand pack 4 consisting of a mixture of  
15                  sand, oil and water. The composition of the uniform mixture charged into the chamber  
16                  3 was:

17	sand -	83 - 87 wt. %
18	oil -	11 - 14 wt. %
19	water -	2 - 3 wt. %

20                  The porosity of the sand pack 4 was about 30% and the permeability was about 10  
21                  darcys.

22                  The loaded cell box 2 was placed inside a larger aluminum box 5 and  
23                  the space between them was filled with vermiculite powder insulation.

1                   Sixty type K thermocouples 6, positioned at 6 cm intervals as shown in  
2       Figures 5a, 5b, 5c and 6, extended through the wall of the cell 1 into the sand pack 4,  
3       for measuring the three dimensional temperature distribution in the sand pack 4.

4                   To compensate for heat losses, the cell 1 was wound with heating tape  
5       (not shown). This heat source was controlled manually, on demand, in response to the  
6       observed combustion peak temperature and adjacent wall temperature values. The  
7       temperature at the wall of the cell was kept a few degrees °C less than the temperature  
8       inside the sand, close to the wall. In this way, the quasi-adiabatic character of the run  
9       was assured.

10                  A cell heater 7 was embedded in the top section of the sand pack 4 at  
11       the air injection end, for raising the temperature in the region of the injection well 8 to  
12       ignition temperature.

13                  One or more simulated air injection wells 8 were provided at the injection  
14       end of the cell 1. A simulated production well 9 was provided at the opposite or  
15       production end of the cell 1.

16                  The positioning and vertical or horizontal disposition of the wells 8, 9 are  
17       shown schematically in Figures 1a, 1b, 2a, 2b, 3, 4a and 4b for the five test runs  
18       reported on below.

19                  As shown in Figures 1a, 1b for run 1-D, the air injection and production  
20       wells 8, 9 were short and coplanar. They were both completed under the horizontal  
21       mid-plane of the sand pack 4. This arrangement simulated vertical injection and  
22       production wells completed at about the same depth. As shown in Figures 2a, 2b for  
23       run 2-D, the air injection well 8 was short and positioned relatively high in the sand  
24       pack 4. The production well 9 was horizontal, elongated, positioned low in the sand  
25       pack 4 relative to the injection well 8 and positioned with its toe 10 adjacent to but

1 spaced from the injection well. As shown in Figure 3 for runs 3-D and 4-W, a row 11  
2 of vertical injection wells 8, positioned laterally across the sand pack 4, were provided.  
3 The injection wells were located relatively high in the sand pack. The production well  
4 9 was horizontal, elongated, positioned low in the sand pack and had its toe adjacent  
5 to but spaced from the injection wells. As shown in Figures 4a, 4b for run 5-D, a single  
6 vertical air injection well 8 was provided high in the sand pack 4 and a pair of  
7 horizontal production wells 9 were provided low in the pack. The production wells were  
8 laterally spaced relative to the injection well, to provide a staggered line drive system.

9 All of the horizontal production wells 9 were arranged to be generally  
10 perpendicular to a laterally extending combustion front developed at the injection  
11 source. However, the toe 10 of the production well was spaced horizontally away from  
12 a vertical projection of the injection well.

13 Each of the injection and production wells 8, 9 were formed of perforated  
14 stainless steel tubing having a bore 4 mm in diameter. The tubing was covered with  
15 100 gauge wire mesh (not shown) to exclude sand from entering the tubing bore.

16 The combustion cell 1 was integrated into a conventional laboratory  
17 system shown in Figure 6. The major components of this system are now shortly  
18 described.

19 Air was supplied to the injection well 8 from a tank 19 through a line 20.  
20 The line 20 was sequentially connected with a gas dryer 21, mass flowmeter 22 and  
21 pressure gauge 23 before reaching the injection well 8. Nitrogen could be supplied to  
22 the injection well 8 from a tank 24 connected to line 20. Water could be supplied to  
23 the injection well 8 from a tank 27 by a pump 25 through line 26. Line 26 was  
24 connected with line 20 downstream of the pressure gauge 23. A temperature controller  
25 28 controlled the ignition heater 7. The produced fluids passed through a line 30

1 connected with a separator 31. Gases separated from the produced fluid and passed  
2 out of the separator 31 through an overhead line 32 controlled by a back pressure  
3 regulator 33. The regulator 33 maintained a constant pressure in the test cell 1. The  
4 volume of the produced gas was measured by a wet test meter 34 connected to line  
5 32. The liquid leaving the separator was collected in a cylinder 40.

6 Part of the produced gas was passed through an oxygen analyzer 36  
7 and gas chromatograph 37. Temperature data from the thermocouples 6 was collected  
8 by a computer 38 and gas composition data was collected from the analyzer 36 and  
9 gas chromatograph 37 by an integrator 39.

10 Air was injected at a rate of approximately  $0.243 \text{ sm}^3/\text{hr.}$  and ignition was  
11 initiated using the heater 7. The tests were typically continued for up to 22 hours. In  
12 the run where water was added, its rate was approximately  $0.43 \text{ kg/hr.}$ .

13 Following completion of each run, an analysis of the cell sand pack 4  
14 was undertaken to determine the volumetric sweep efficiency. The analysis comprised  
15 a physical removal of successive vertical layers of the sandpack at 3 cm intervals and  
16 determining the extent of the burned zone by measuring the oil and coke content. In  
17 this way the volumetric sweep of the burning front was determined post-mortem and  
18 compared with that obtained from the peak temperature profiles during the run.

19 The relevant results for the runs are set forth in Table I.

TABLE I

<u>Run</u>	<u>Configuration</u>	<u>Volume Swept %</u>	<u>Air-Oil Ratio (SM<sup>3</sup>/M<sup>3</sup>)</u>	<u>Average Gravity (°API) Of Produced Oil</u>
1-D	Fig. 1	58.7	2045	14
2-D	Fig. 2	53.0	1960	19 - 21
3-D	Fig. 3	66	--	19 - 21
4-W	Fig. 3	77	923	19 - 21
5-D	Fig. 4	69.5	1554	15

Legend: D = dry in situ combustion

W = moderate wet combustion

Figures 7a and 7b show the isotherm or temperature contour maps developed along the horizontal mid-plane and the central vertical mid-plane, respectively, in the sand pack after 930 minutes of combustion during run 1-D, using the well configuration of Figures 1a and 1b. (This run was carried out using conventional vertical well placement.)

The nature and extent of the volume swept by the combustion front is indicated by the isotherms. It will be noted that, in the plan view of Figure 7a, the combustion front was relatively narrow towards the production well side. Large volumes of oil were left substantially unheated on each side of the sand pack. On the other hand, the central vertical mid-plane isotherms in Figure 7b show that the leading edge of the maximum recorded temperature ( $> 350^{\circ}\text{C}$ ), in the region closed to the production well, is already located in the upper third of the layer. These results are indicative of gas override.

1                Figures 8a and 8b show Isotherm maps developed along the horizontal  
2                mid-plane and the central vertical mid-plane, respectively, in the sand pack after 999  
3                minutes of combustion during run 2-D, using the well configuration of Figures 2a and  
4                2b. As shown, the isotherms indicate that the combustion front was substantially wider  
5                than that of Run 1 and more upright.

6                Figures 9a and 9b show Isotherm maps developed along horizontal  
7                planes at the top and bottom of the sand pack after 45 minutes of combustion during  
8                Run 3-D, using the well configuration of Figure 3. Figures 9c, 9d, 9e and 9f show  
9                Isotherm maps developed along the central vertical plane of the sand pack after 45,  
10              240, 360 and 460 minutes respectively. The Isotherms demonstrate that the  
11              combustion front generated by the row of injection wells extended laterally, remained  
12              generally linear and was generally upright throughout the test. Stated otherwise, the  
13              lateral and vertical sweep was much improved relative to that of Run 1-D. This run 3-D  
14              demonstrated the preferred form of the invention.

15              In the preferred field embodiment of the invention, illustrated in Figures  
16              11 and 12, a reservoir 100 is characterized by a downward dip and lateral strike. A  
17              row 101 of vertical air injection wells 102 is completed high in the reservoir 100 along  
18              the strike. At least two rows 103, 104 of production wells 105, 106, having generally  
19              horizontal legs 107, are completed low in the reservoir and down dip from the injection  
20              wells, with their toes 108 closest to the injection wells 102. The toes 108 of the row  
21              103 of production wells 105 are spaced down dip from a vertical projection of the  
22              injection wells 102. The second row 104 of production wells 106 is spaced down dip  
23              from the first row 103. Generally, the distance between wells, within a row, is  
24              considerably lower than the distance between adjacent rows.



1                   In the first phase of the process, a generally linear combustion front is  
2     generated in the reservoir 100 by injecting air through every second well 102.  
3     Preferably a generally linear lateral combustion front is developed by initiating  
4     combustion at every second well and advancing these fronts laterally until the other  
5     wells are intercepted by the combustion front and by keeping the horizontal production  
6     wells closed. Then, air is injected through all the wells 102 in order to link these  
7     separate fronts to form a single front. The front is then propagated down dip toward  
8     the first row 103 of production wells 105. The horizontal legs of the production wells  
9     105 are generally perpendicular to the front. The production wells 105 are open during  
10    this step, to create a low pressure sink to induce the front to advance along their  
11    horizontal legs 107 and to provide an outlet for the heated oil. When the front  
12    approaches the heel 109 of each production well 105, the well is closed in. The  
13    horizontal legs 106 of the closed-in wells 105 are then filled with cement. The wells  
14    105 are then perforated high in the reservoir 100 and converted to air injection, thereby  
15    continuing the propagation of a combustion front toward the second row 104 of  
16    production wells 106. Preferably, the first row 101 of injection wells is converted to  
17    water injection, for scavenging heat in the burnt out zone and bringing it ahead of the  
18    combustion zone. This process is repeated as the front progresses through the various  
19    rows of production wells.

20                   By the practise of this process, a guided combustion front is caused to  
21    move through the reservoir with good volumetric sweep efficiency.

1 THE EMBODIMENTS OF THE INVENTION IN WHICH AN  
2 EXCLUSIVE PROPERTY OR PRIVILEGE IS CLAIMED ARE DEFINED AS  
3 FOLLOWS:

4 1. A process for reducing the viscosity of oil and recovering it from an  
5 underground oil-containing reservoir, comprising:

6 providing an injection well, completed in the reservoir, for injecting a  
7 gaseous fluid into the reservoir to form an advancing, laterally extending  
8 displacement front operative to reduce the viscosity of reservoir oil;

9 providing at least one open production well having a generally  
10 horizontal leg completed in the reservoir, said leg having a toe spaced along  
11 the main plane of the reservoir relative to the injection well, said leg being  
12 positioned substantially perpendicular to and in the path of the advancing  
13 displacement front;

14 injecting the fluid through the injection well and advancing the displacement  
15 front along the leg; and

16 producing the production well to recover reduced-viscosity oil from the  
17 reservoir.

18

19 2. An in-situ combustion process for recovering oil from an  
20 underground oil-containing reservoir, comprising:

21 providing an air injection well completed in the reservoir;

Discriminator 12: Permeability

1 providing at least one open production well comprising a generally  
2 horizontal leg having a toe and heel and being completed in the reservoir,  
3 said leg having its toe spaced along the main plane of the reservoir relative to  
4 the injection well, said leg being positioned generally perpendicularly to the  
5 injection well so as to lie in the path of a combustion front established by the  
6 injection well;

7 injecting air through the injection well and initiating and propagating a  
8 combustion front, extending laterally of the production well horizontal leg, so  
9 that it advances toward and along the leg; and

10 producing the production well to recover heated oil from the reservoir.

11

12 3. The process as set forth in claim 1 or 2 wherein the injection well is  
13 completed relatively high in the reservoir and the horizontal leg of the  
14 production well is completed relatively low in the reservoir.

15

16 4. The process as set forth in claim 2 wherein:

17 a generally linear array of vertical injection wells is provided and the toe  
18 of the horizontal leg of the production well is adjacent to but offset from the  
19 injection wells.

---

1           5. The process as set forth in claim 2 wherein:

2           the injection well is completed relatively high in the reservoir and the  
3 horizontal leg of the production well is completed relatively low in the  
4 reservoir;

5           the reservoir extends downwardly at an angle to have dip and strike;  
6 and

7           the injection well extends generally along the strike and the horizontal  
8 leg of the production well extends along the dip.

9

10          6. The process as set forth in claim 4 wherein:

11          the reservoir extends downwardly at an angle to have dip and strike;  
12 a plurality of production wells as aforesaid are provided, said production wells  
13 being arrayed in at least two spaced apart rows parallel with the array of  
14 injection wells, which are located at the uppermost part of the oil reservoir;  
15 and

16          the rows of injection wells and production wells extend along the strike  
17 and the horizontal legs of the production wells extend along the dip.

18

19          7. The process as set forth in claim 6 comprising:

20          closing each production well in the first row as the combustion front  
21 approaches the heel of its horizontal leg;

22          filling the horizontal legs of the closed production wells in the first row  
23 with cement, re-completing the wells high in the reservoir and converting them  
24 to air injection wells; and

---

1 initiating air injection through the converted wells to advance a  
2 combustion front toward the second row of production wells and along their  
3 horizontal legs.

4

5 8. The process as set forth in claim 7 comprising:

6 injecting water through the array of original air injection wells in the  
7 course of injecting air through the converted wells.

8

9 9. The process as set forth in claim 7 wherein the injection well is  
10 completed relatively high in the reservoir and the horizontal leg of the  
11 production well is completed relatively low in the reservoir.

12

13 10. The process as set forth in claim 1 wherein the injected gaseous  
14 fluid is steam.

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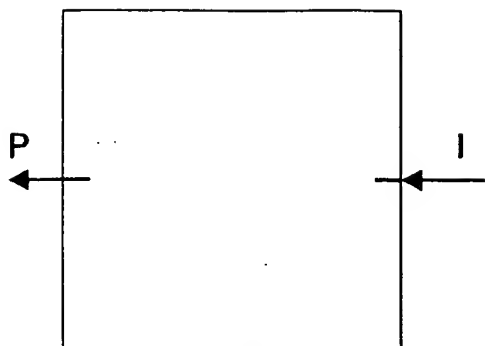


FIG. 1A.

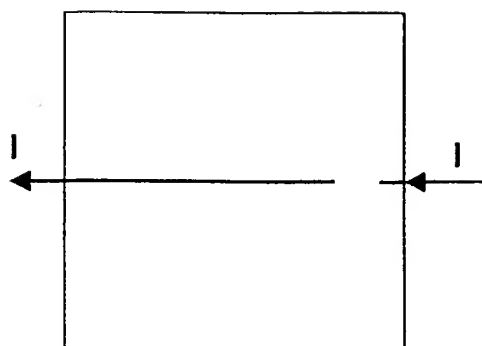


FIG. 2A.

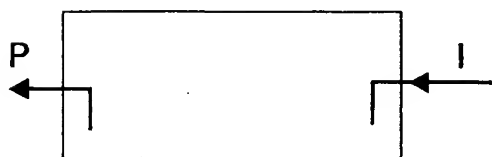


FIG. 1B.

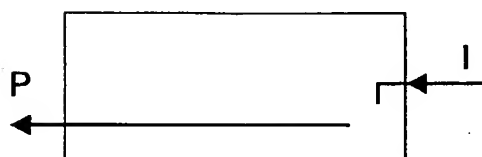


FIG. 2B.

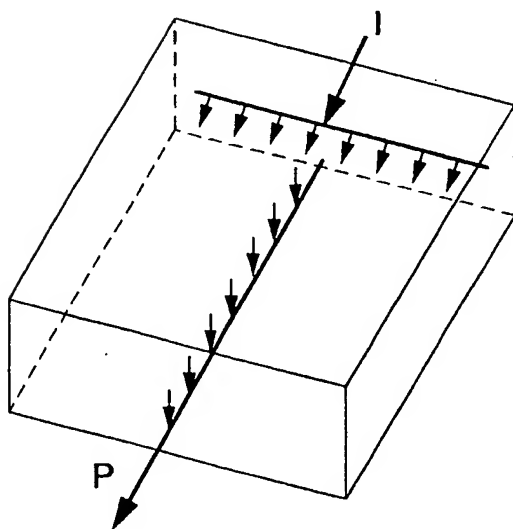


FIG. 3.

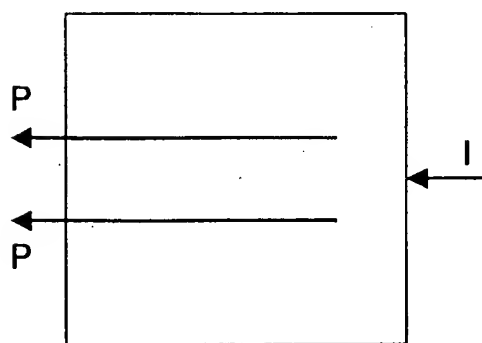


FIG. 4A.

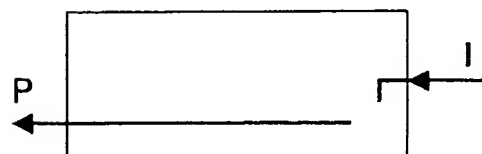


FIG. 4B.

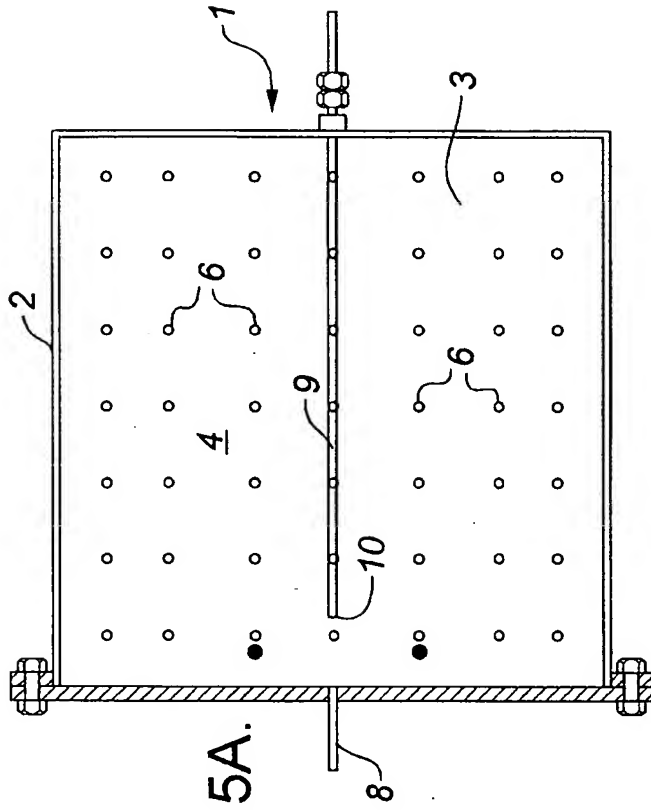


FIG. 5A.

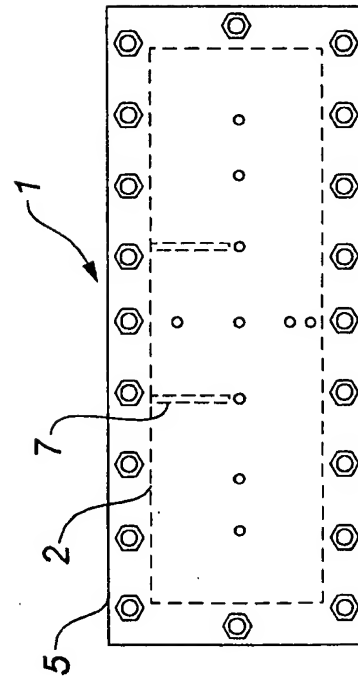


FIG. 5C.

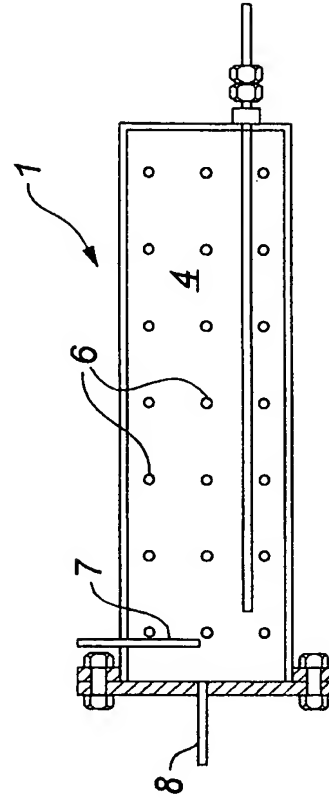


FIG. 5B.

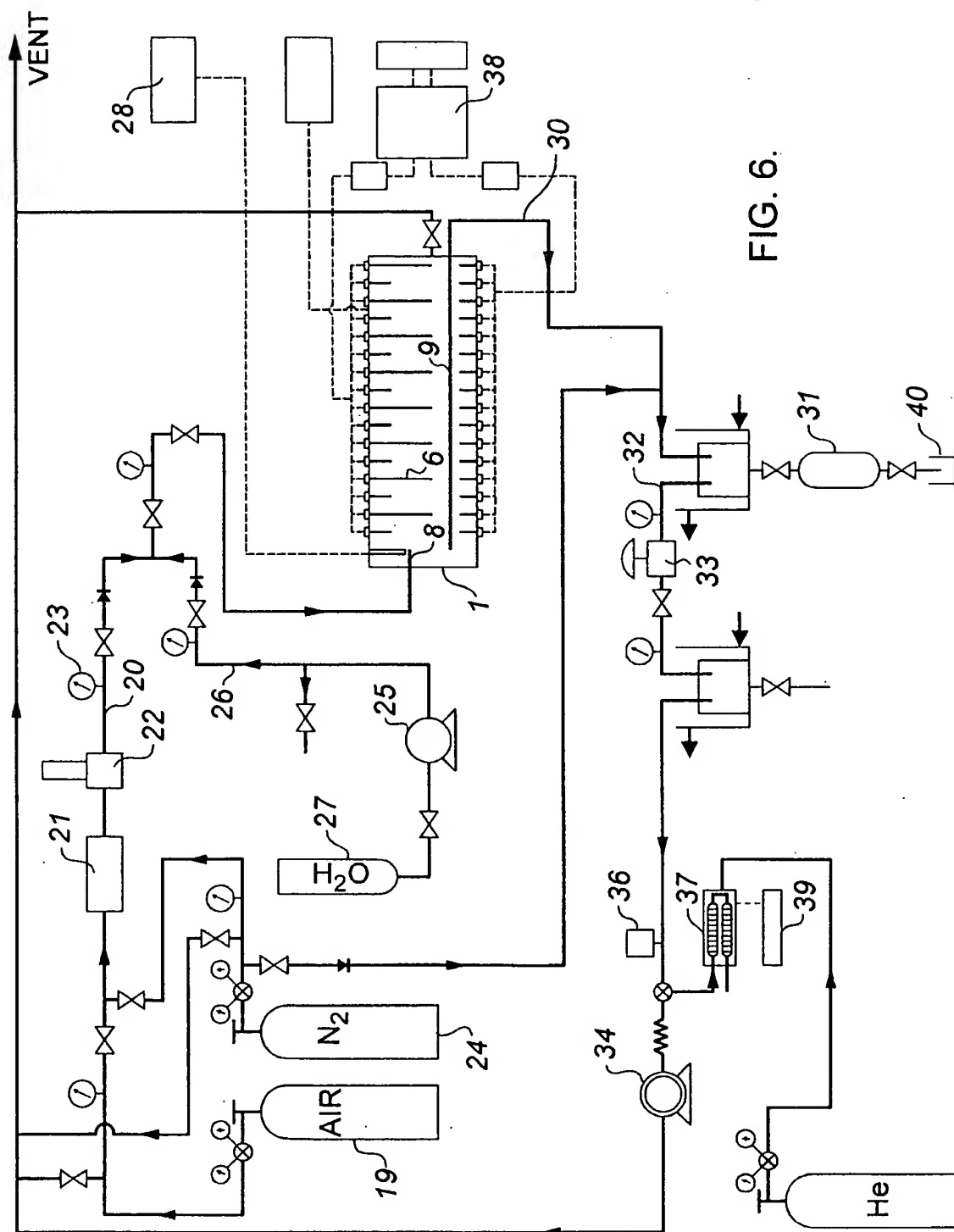
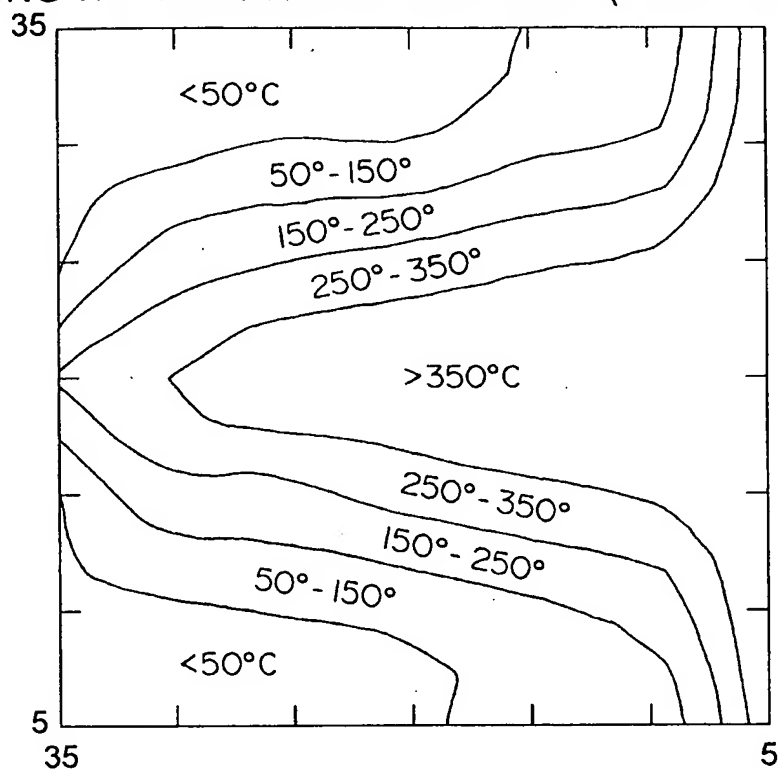


FIG. 6.



**FIG. 7A.**

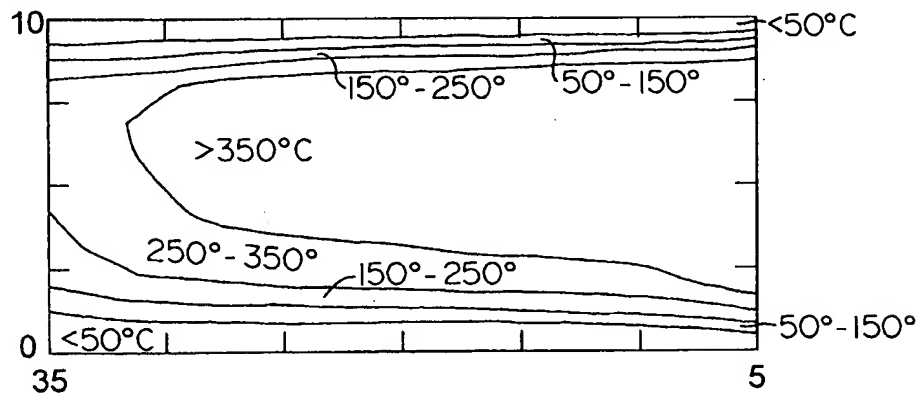
VOLUME SWEEPED BY THE COMBUSTION FRONT  
ALONG THE HORIZONTAL MIDPLANE (Time = 930 min.)



DISTANCE (cm)

**FIG. 7B.**

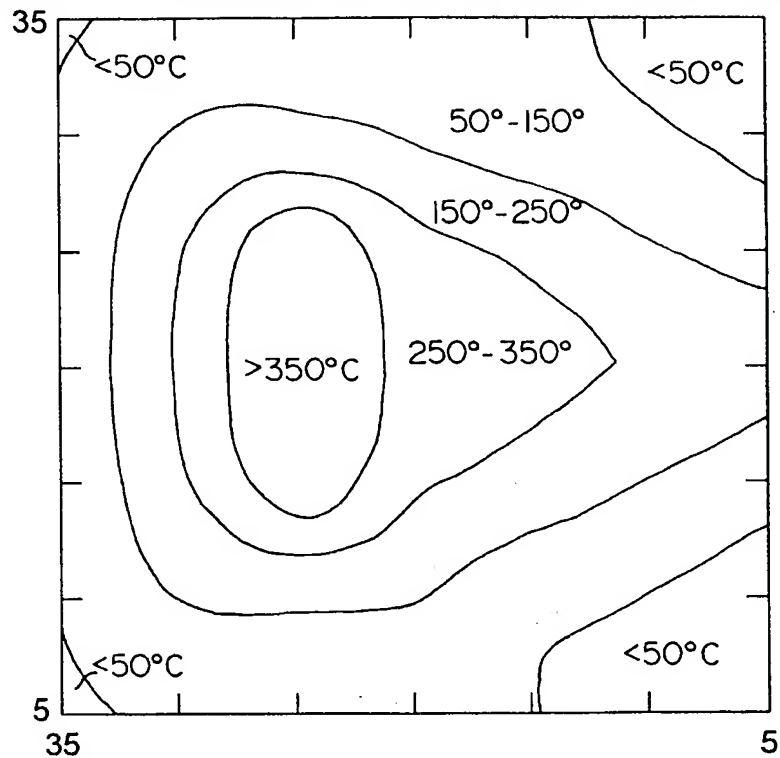
VOLUME SWEEPED BY THE COMBUSTION FRONT  
ALONG THE VERTICAL MIDPLANE (Time = 930 min.)



DISTANCE (cm)

**FIG. 8A.**

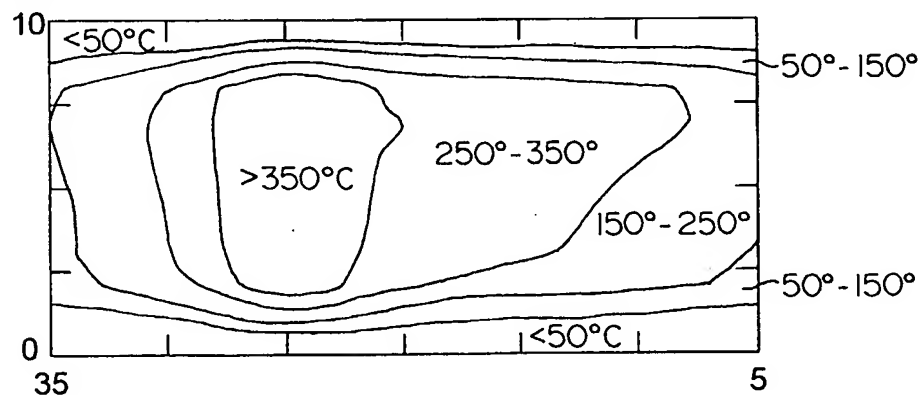
VOLUME SWEEPED BY THE COMBUSTION FRONT  
ALONG THE HORIZONTAL MIDPLANE (Time = 999 min.)



DISTANCE (cm)

**FIG. 8B.**

VOLUME SWEEPED BY THE COMBUSTION FRONT  
ALONG THE VERTICAL MIDPLANE (Time = 999 min.)



DISTANCE (cm)

FIG. 9A.

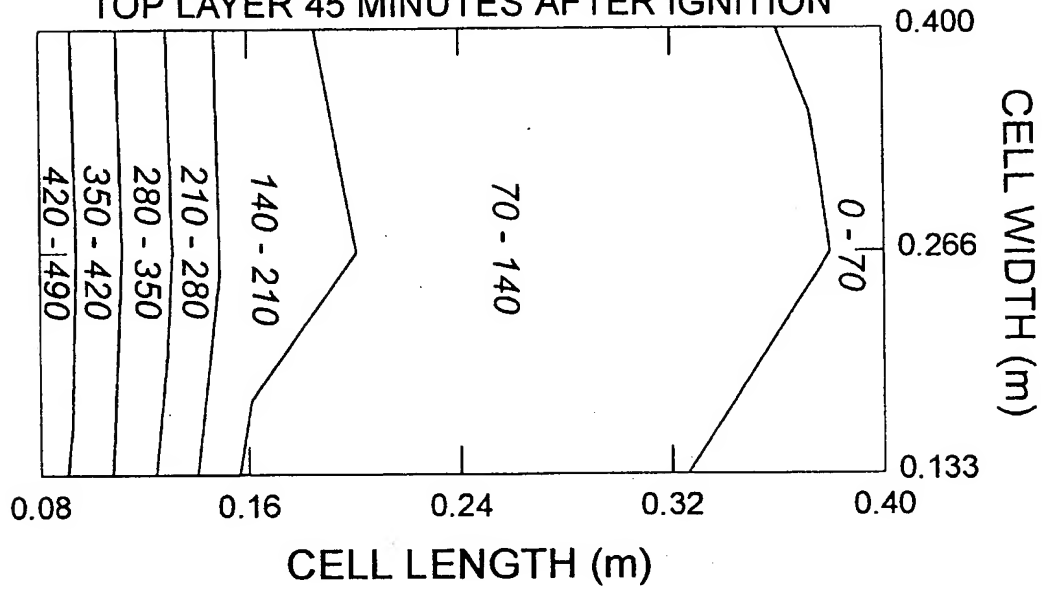
HORIZONTAL TEMPERATURE PROFILES AT  
TOP LAYER 45 MINUTES AFTER IGNITION

FIG. 9B.

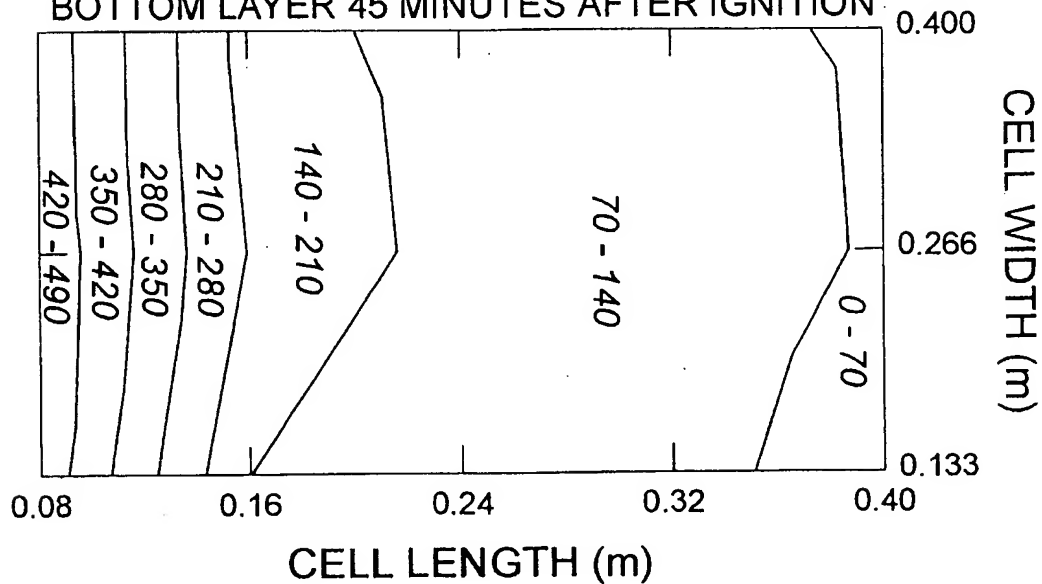
HORIZONTAL TEMPERATURE PROFILES AT  
BOTTOM LAYER 45 MINUTES AFTER IGNITION

FIG. 9C.

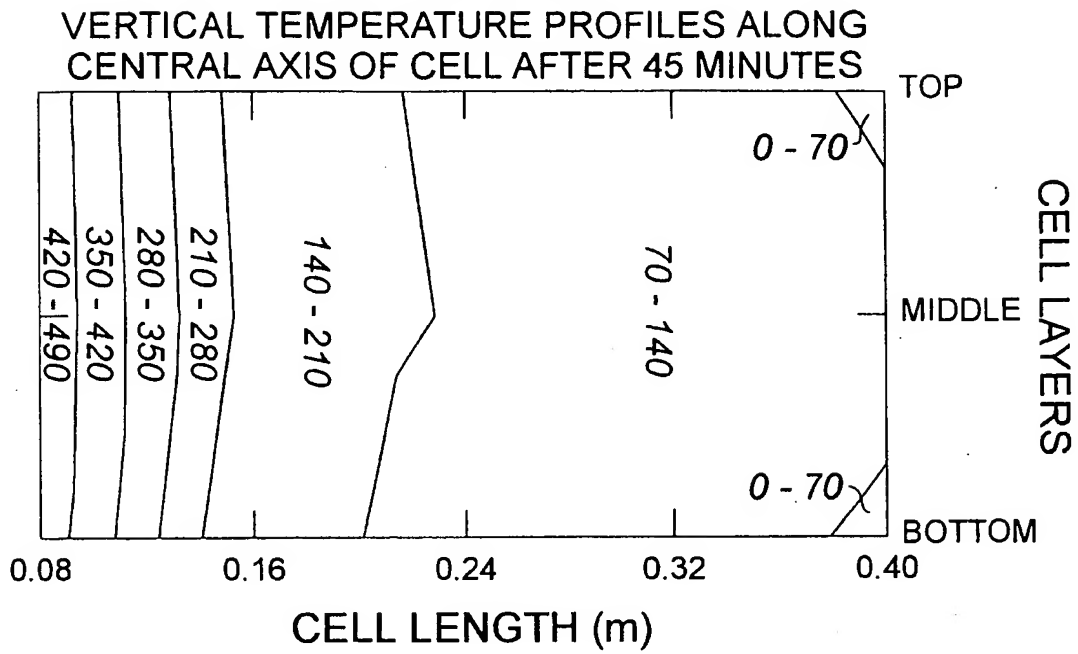


FIG. 9D.

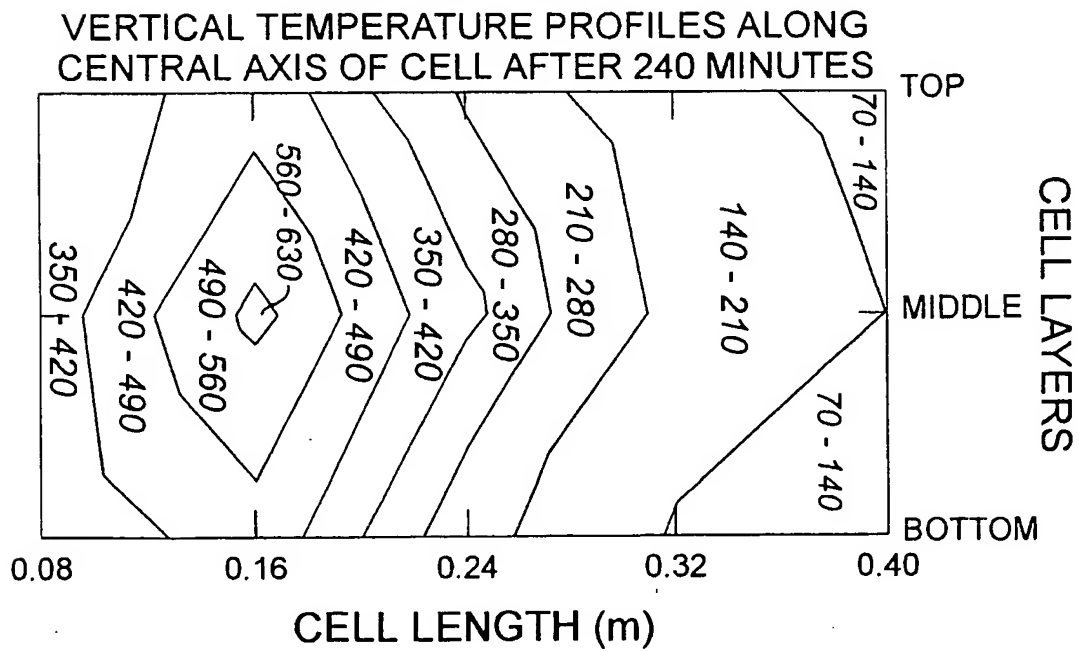


FIG. 9E.

VERTICAL TEMPERATURE PROFILES ALONG  
CENTRAL AXIS OF CELL AFTER 360 MINUTES

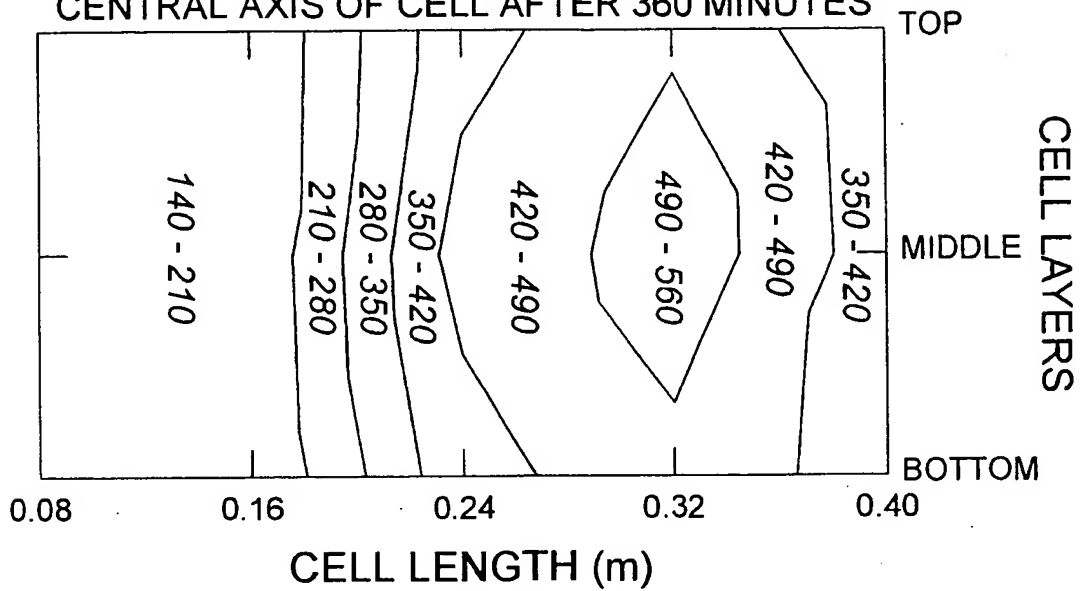


FIG. 9F.

VERTICAL TEMPERATURE PROFILES ALONG  
CENTRAL AXIS OF CELL AFTER 460 MINUTES

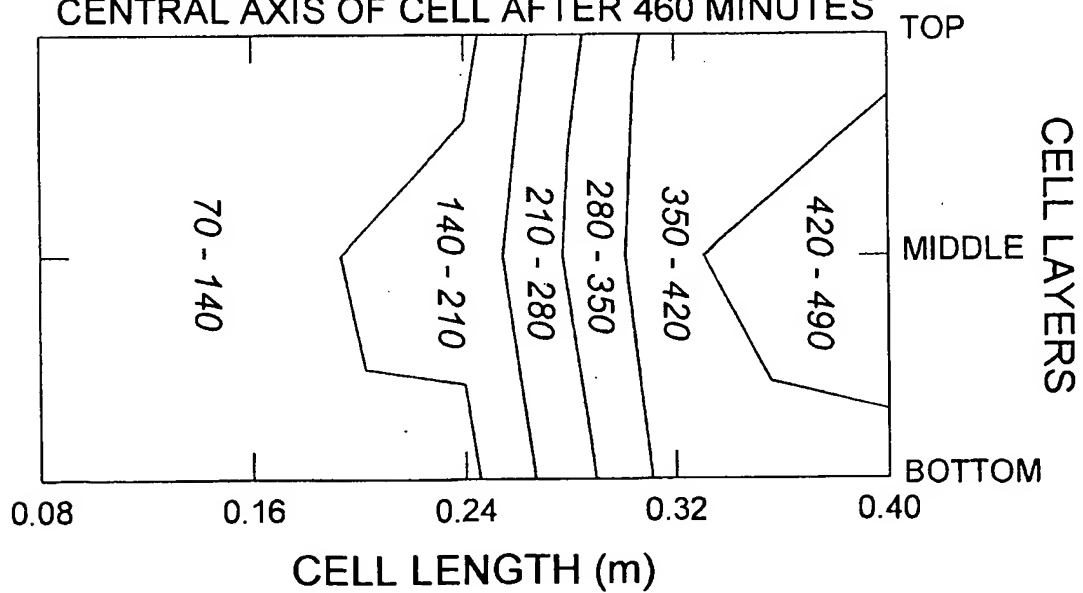


FIG. 10.

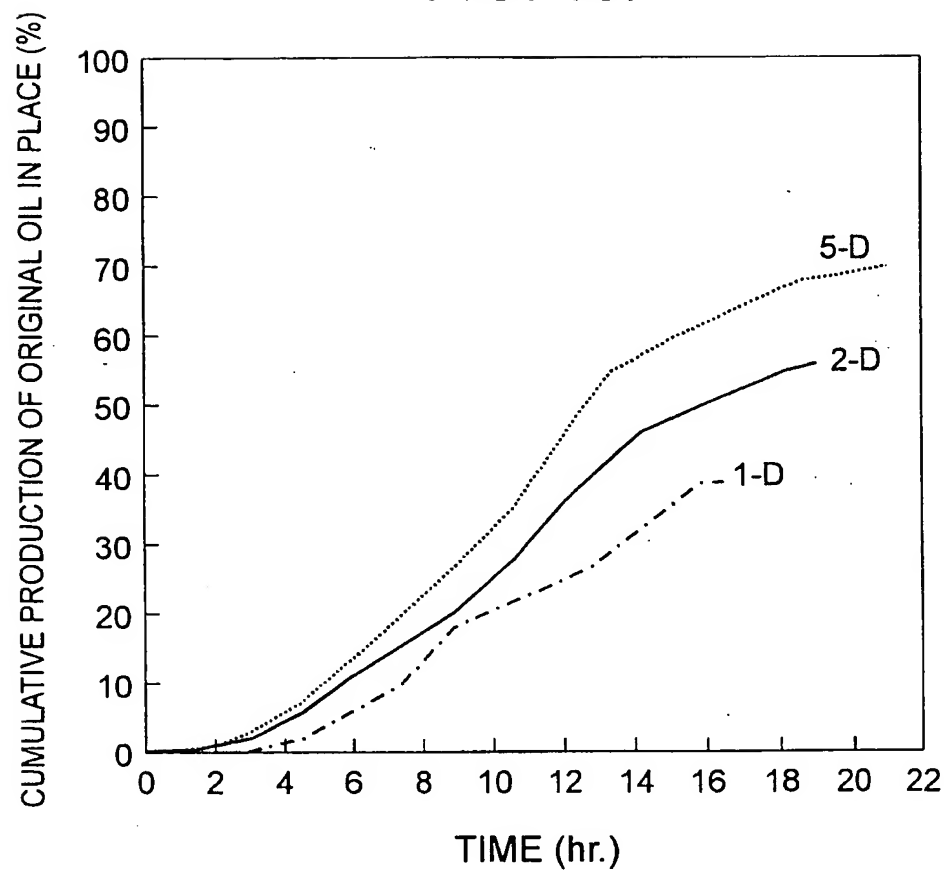


FIG. 11.

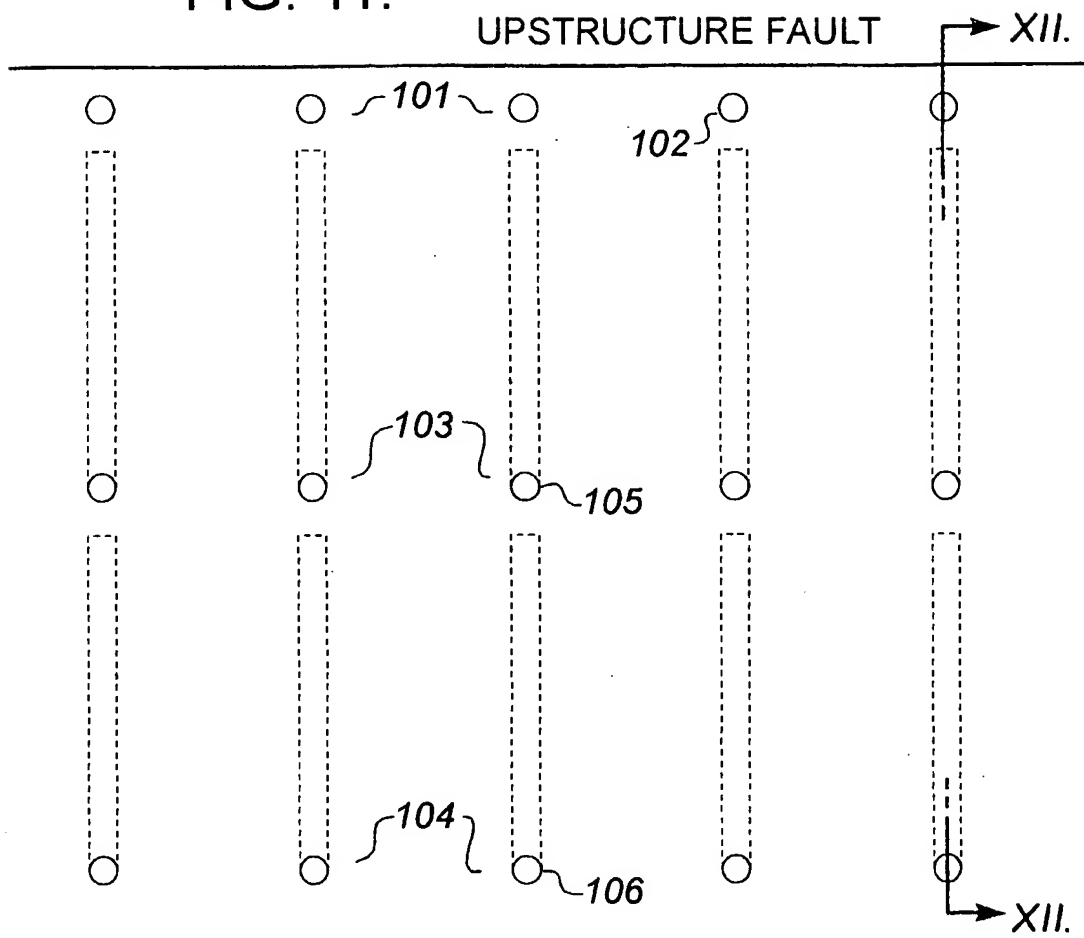


FIG. 12.

